NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Syllabus

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Fishman & Schwarz, Nonprofit Organizations: Cases and Materials (Foundation Press, 4th ed. 2010) (hereinafter "CB" for "Casebook")


2012 Update Memorandum to Casebook. Distributed electronically and also posted on class web site, along with other occasional handouts.

Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (Form 1023) and Instructions-- on class web site and IRS web site; see also Stat. Supp. 1099-1126


Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization (Publication No. 557)

Tax on Unrelated Business Income of Exempt Organizations (Publication No. 598)

Charitable Contributions (Publication No. 526)

and many other resources on IRS web site

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL REFERENCE BOOKS


Mancuso, How to Form a Nonprofit Corporation in California (Nolo Press, 14th ed.). A “how to” resource that is useful for beginning or generalist lawyers who are helping to set up a new nonprofit organization. Available in library (KFC342.M363).

BLOGS (Selective list; for other Internet resources, see Stat. Supp. 1133-1137)


GUIDESTAR

Guidestar – http://www.guidestar.org – is a leading data base on the nonprofit sector, providing access to all publicly available Form 990s filed by thousands of U.S. nonprofit organizations. Edu@GuideStar is a free service available to students and teachers in classes related to the sector. This class will be registered for this service for the Fall 2012 semester, giving all of us access to GuideStar Premium service at no cost.

STUDENT STUDY AIDS


CLASS WEB SITE

The link to the class web site is:

http://www.uchastings.edu/faculty-administration/faculty/schwarz/class-website/index.html
The class web site includes this syllabus, Form 1023, and a few class handouts.

GOALS OF THE COURSE

The general goal is to survey the law governing nonprofit organizations from the perspective of both state law (formation, governance, fiduciary duty of officers, directors and trustees, and related issues) and federal (mostly tax) law. About 1/3 of the class covers state law and 2/3 covers federal tax law.

Particular goals (also known as desired “learning outcomes”) are to: (1) learn about a fascinating and dynamic area of the law, using an approach that blends theory, legal doctrine and practice; (2) provide an opportunity for skills training through a real-world simulation exercise; and (3) have a stimulating classroom experience in an informal seminar-like setting. The course is designed to be valuable for students whose career path will include interaction with the nonprofit sector as an employee, grantseeker, donor, board member, voyeur, journalist, or a paid or volunteer legal advisor to all of the above.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Final grades will be based 30% on a take-home skills training exercise and 70% on a conventional final exam. In addition, as discussed below, discretionary grade adjustments may be made based on class participation.

The exercise will require preparing an application for tax-exempt status for a hypothetical nonprofit organization, along with a brief memo addressing a few aspects of the formation and application process. The assignment will be distributed on Thursday, September 27 and will be due on Monday, October 29. More details will be provided in class.

The open book three-hour final exam (you can bring anything you want except your attorney) will consist of a series of essay questions of varying length. It is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 4, 2012, in the afternoon. More information, including some questions from past exams, will be provided near the end of the semester.

ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Regular attendance is assumed, and participation in class discussion will be greatly appreciated and rewarded if it adds value. In determining final grades, discretionary grade adjustments of up to one level (e.g., "B" to "B+", or vice versa) may be made based on meaningful contributions to class discussion or deficient preparation, chronic muteness, extraneous surfing on your laptop, or non-attendance.
READING ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE OUTLINE

The weekly allocation of reading assignments is intended to be a close approximation. You are encouraged to complete the reading for a particular week even if (as is possible) the class discussion is so lively that we fall slightly behind this schedule.

At the beginning of most assigned topics, the casebook provides references (in bold type) to original sources, such as statutes and regulations, virtually all of which can be found in the Statutes, Regulations and Forms Supplement. Assignments (sometimes abridged) to these sources also are provided on the syllabus. Follow the syllabus. Most assignments also include problems in the casebook. They usually will be the focus of class discussion. The statutes and regulations are most effectively used as research tools for solving the problems, especially on the more technical tax topics.

Items marked with an asterisk ( *) will be given accelerated treatment. "Skim" means that you only need to look at and be generally familiar with the material assigned.

Week of:

8/20/12  Scope Note:  Our first two classes provide an introductory overview of the nonprofit sector -- its dimensions and demographics, historical roots, role in contemporary society, and legal framework. We then will turn to the major legal issues that arise on the formation of a nonprofit organization, particularly choice of legal form under state law, organizational logistics, and the attorney's role in all of the foregoing. This introductory coverage concludes with an exploration of the rationale for charitable tax exemptions. A few specific hypothetical fact patterns will be provided to facilitate discussion of the theoretical portions of the reading assignment.

In explaining the attorney's role on formation of a nonprofit organization, the California C.E.B. text, Advising California Nonprofit Corporations (Chapter 1), poses 12 basic questions. They are:

1. Is a new entity necessary?
2. Is there a sound business plan and is the new entity financially viable?
3. Should the organization be a nonprofit entity and what are the circumstances to consider?
4. Should the organization be a nonprofit entity and what special treatment is available?
5. If nonprofit, what type of entity should it be?
6. In what state or country should it be organized?
7. If a California nonprofit corporation, should it be public benefit, mutual benefit, or religious?
8/20/12

8. If a California nonprofit corporation, should it have voting members?
9. Is tax exemption appropriate and desirable?
10. If tax exemption is desirable, under what section of the Internal Revenue Code?
11. If the organization will be exempt from tax under § 501(c)(3), can it qualify for public charity classification under § 509?
12. If the organization does not qualify as a public charity, can it accept various restrictions applicable to private foundations?
13. And this additional question . . . how much should I charge for doing all this work? Should I get paid up-front?

All these questions will be answered during the course.

INTRODUCTION

AN OVERVIEW OF THE NONPROFIT SECTOR

Skim I.R.C. §§ 501(a)-(c); 170(a)(1),(c); 509(a); Calif. Corp. Code § 5410, first sentence only
CB 2-19, 25-28 (read quickly for general background), 30-38

FORMATION OF A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

CHOICE OF LEGAL FORM; TAX EXEMPTION

Calif. Corp. Code §§ 5111; 5130; 5227
I.R.C. § 508(a)-(c)
CB 39-44, 48-58, 317-319
Skim sample organizational forms (Stat. Supp. 1006-1018) and Form 1023 (Stat. Supp. 1099-1126)
Problem: CB 45

CHARITABLE TAX EXEMPTIONS: THEORY, STAKES AND QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

RATIONALE FOR TAX EXEMPTION

CB 294-314
Scope Note: This week's classes begin a survey of the affirmative requirements for charitable tax exemption under § 501(c)(3). The threshold question is: what purposes and activities are "charitable?" The standards will be studied in context, beginning with health care providers (primarily hospitals) and then turning to other types of "charities." The focus will be – what are the requirements (warning – this material can be a little slippery) but we also will devote some attention to policy issues (i.e., what should be they be).

ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL TESTS

I.R.C. § 501(c)(3)
Regs. §§ 1.501(c)(3)-1(a), (b)(1)-(4), (c)(1)-(2)
CB 315-317

THE EVOLVING CONCEPT OF "CHARITY"

Introduction

Treas. Reg. § 1.501(c)(3)-1(d)(1) & (2)
CB 319-323; skim 72-77

Hospitals and Health Care Organizations

CB 323-343; look at Form 990, Sch. H (Stat. Supp. 1080-1083)
Problems: 343-344

*Public Interest Law Firms; Legal Services

CB 344-351
Problems: 350-351 (omit (c))

*Community Development and Low-Income Housing

CB 351-357

*Protection of the Environment

CB 357-362
9/3/12

**Scope Note:** This week’s classes begin with the public policy limitation, a judicially-created rule that has been principally applied to deny § 501(c)(3) tax exemption to racially discriminatory schools. We then consider the special qualification requirements and issues for educational and religious organizations, and a few other specialized types of § 501(c)(3) charities.

**The Public Policy Limitation**

CB 369-397; look at Form 990, Sch. E (Stat. Supp. 1072)
Problems: CB 397-398

**Educational Organizations**

Treas. Reg. § 1.501(c)(3)-1(d)(3)
CB 398-414
Problems: CB 414-415

**Churches and Other Religious Organizations**

CB 415-430
Problems: CB 430-431

**Other Charitable Purposes**

Skim I.R.C. §§ 501(e), (f), (j)
CB 431-432, 437-439
Scope Note: The next two weeks and part of the following week are devoted to the role and fiduciary duties of officers and directors and how they are enforced under state and federal law. Coverage begins from the perspective of state law, using California as the model, and then turns standards and sanctions imposed by federal tax law. The goal is to study what the law requires (this sometimes is amorphous) and what are "best practices" for nonprofit officers and directors.

OPERATION AND GOVERNANCE

INTRODUCTION; DIRECTORS, TRUSTEES AND MEMBERS

Calif. Corp. Code §§ 5210; review § 5227
CB 123-128

FIDUCIARY DUTIES AND BEST PRACTICES

The Fiduciary Concept

CB 134-136

The Duty of Care

Calif. Corp. Code §§ 5230; 5231; 5047.5
CB 136-157 (it's ok to read the three cases quickly, focusing on how the directors or trustees got into trouble and what standards were applied by the courts in evaluating their fiduciary behavior)
Problems: CB 157-158 (omit (e))

The Duty of Loyalty

Calif. Corp. Code §§ 5227; 5233(a)-(d), (g), (h); 5235; 5236; skim § 7233
CB 163-166; 170 (begin with Notes)-189; 196-198
Problems: CB 198-199 (Problems 1(a)-(b), (e), (g), (h))

*The Duty of Obedience

CB 199-202

*Insurance; Indemnification

Skim CB 158-162
**Scope Note:** Tuesday’s class is devoted to a fiduciary’s responsibility for investments and endowments under state law. On Thursday, the focus shifts to state enforcement of fiduciary duties (including the role of donors), the cy pres doctrine, and an introduction to the federal fiduciary regulation regime.

**Investment Responsibility; Endowments**

CB 202-220
Problems: CB 212, 220-221

**ENFORCEMENT OF FIDUCIARY DUTIES**

**In General**

Skim core portions of Form 990 (Stat. Supp 1045-1056)
CB 221-226

**State Law (Role of the Attorney General)**

CB 226-231

**Donors (and Donor Standing Issues)**

CB 231-237

**Cy Pres and Deviation**

CB 90-106

**Federal Tax Law: Introduction – Inurement and Private Benefit**

I.R.C. § 501(c)(3); look at § 4958
Treas. Reg. §§ 1.501(c)(3)-1(c)(2)
CB 445-460; 249-256; 460-461; look at Form 990, Sch. J (Stat. Supp. 1086-1087)
Scope Note: Tuesday’s class will apply the inurement and private benefit limitations and the intermediate sanctions excise tax rules to the assigned problems. Thursday’s class begins a survey of the first of two major "border patrol" limitations on § 501(c)(3) exempt status: the limitations on lobbying and political campaign activities. We start by examining the permissible level of lobbying activities by § 501(c)(3) organizations. The main event is the § 4911 expenditure test election, which is rather technical. Don’t get discouraged by all the detail. Our goal is to develop an appreciation of the considerable opportunities for charities to influence the political process. After a brief discussion of the Christian Echoes case and a mini-lecture on the § 501(h) election, we will turn to the problems at pp. 506-508.

Federal Tax Law – Intermediate Sanctions

I.R.C. § 4958(a), (b), (c)(1), (d), (e), (f)
Treas. Reg. §§ 1.501(c)(3)-1(f) (it’s ok just to read a few of the examples);
53.4958 as needed for problems
CB 461-471
Problems: CB 471-474 (Problems 1(a), (c)-(f) & 2 if time permits)

LOBBYING AND POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

Background

CB 474-476; look at Form 990, Sch. C (Stat. Supp. 1063-1065)

No Substantial Part Test

I.R.C. §§ 501(c)(3); 504; 4912; 170(f)(6)
Treas. Reg. § 1.501(c)(3)-1(c)(3)
CB 476-488

*Constitutional Issues

CB 488-497 (this is a "skim"; it’s an important and interesting case but our discussion will cut to the chase on its rationale and the concerns expressed in Justice Blackmun’s dissent)
9/24/12  The § 501(h) Expenditure Test Election

(cont’d)

I.R.C. §§ 501(h); 4911(a)-(e), (f)(1)(A)
Treas. Reg. -- The § 1.501(h) and § 1.4911 regulations should be used selectively as a research source for the problems
CB 497-506
Problem: CB 506-508 (some of this will spill over to next week)

10/1/12  Scope Note:  After finishing up the lobbying problem we move to the political campaign limitations under tax and election law, focusing on the problems at pp. 536-537, and conclude by considering the impact on nonprofit organizations of the Supreme Court’s controversial *Citizens United* decision.  Private foundations will be introduced near the end of Thursday’s class.

Political Campaign Tax Limitations & Alternative Structures

I.R.C. §§ 501(c)(4); 504; 4955; Skim § 527
CB 508-539
Problem: CB 536-537

Nontax Regulation & the *Citizens United* Case

CB 539-542, and enjoy the video clip below

PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS, PUBLIC CHARITIES AND OTHER FOUNDATION ALTERNATIVES

THE UNIVERSE OF PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

CB 703-715

10/8/12  Scope Note:  Classes for the next three weeks cover the distinction between private foundations and public charities, private foundation grantmaking alternatives, and the private foundation excise taxes.  Our initial goal is to understand the pros and cons of private foundations and then explore the various paths to avoiding private foundation status when avoidance is desirable.  This week’s material will be covered largely through discussion of the problems at pp. 737-738
10/8/12 PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND PUBLIC CHARITIES

I.R.C. §§ 509; 170(b)(1)(A); 507(d)(2); 4946
Treas. Reg. §§ 1.170-9T(f)(1), (2), (3), (4)(i)-(iii), (6)(i), (7)(i) (don’t blame the messenger); you have been spared Treas. Reg. § 1.509(a)-3T but take a peek. Note: The “T” is in the Regulations cite is for “temporary” but these regulations are now “final.” A brief explanation of the distinction will be provided in class.
CB 721-730, 739-749
Problem: CB 737-738 (Problem 1)

PRIVATE FOUNDATION ALTERNATIVES

I.R.C. §§ 509(a)(3); 4958(c)(2) & (3), (f)(1)(D); 4966 (omit (d)(4)); 4967
CB 715-720, 730-736
Problem: CB 738 (Problem 2)

*Private Operating Foundations

I.R.C. § 4942(j)(3)
CB 763-764

10/15/12 PRIVATE FOUNDATION EXCISE TAXES

Introduction

CB 765-766

*Tax on Net Investment Income

Skim I.R.C. § 4940
CB 766-768

*Charitable Distribution Requirements

Skim I.R.C. § 4942
CB 781-785
Week of:

10/15/12 Jeopardy and Program-Related Investments
(cont’d)

Skim I.R.C. § 4944
Prop. Reg. § 43.4944-3(b) Examples 11, 14, 15 & 16 (2012 Update Memo pp. 28-30)
CB 794-795; 2012 Update Memo 19-20

Excess Business Holdings

Skim I.R.C. § 4943
CB 789-791
Problem: CB 793 (omit (d))

Question Session and “Pep Talk” on Writing Assignment

During Thursday’s class, we will devote 20 minutes or so to some final tips on the writing assignment and entertain any reasonable questions about the facts and instructions.

10/22/12 Scope Note: This week concludes a survey of the private foundation excise taxes, focusing on some major operational issues and challenges for private foundations. The emphasis will be on preventive maintenance – how to help a private foundation avoid the various excise tax penalties.

Schedule Notes: There will be no class on Tuesday, October 23. On Thursday, October 25, the class will be taught by guest professor Barbara Rosen, a 2000 Hastings graduate, partner in the San Francisco law firm of Evans & Rosen– http://www.evansrosen.com/, and experienced teacher in the field.

Self-Dealing

Skim I.R.C. § 4941
CB 769-773
Problems: 780-781 (Problems 1(a)-(f), (g)(1) & (2))

Taxable Expenditures

Skim I.R.C. § 4945
CB 795-803
Problem: CB 803-804 (Problems (a), (b), (d), (g), (h))
Scope Note: Classes for this week cover the impact of commercial activities on qualification for exempt status and introduce the unrelated business income tax (“UBIT”).

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES AND THE UBIT

Introduction

CB 567-570

UBIT History and Policy

CB 591-596, 601-603

Impact of Commercial Activities on Exempt Status

CB 570-590
Treas. Reg. § 1.501(c)(3)-1(b)(1)(i), (iii), -1(c)(1), -1(e)
Problems: CB 590-591

Nature of an Unrelated Trade or Business

I.R.C. §§ 511(a), (b); 512(a)(1); 513(a), (c), (f), (h), (i); skim § 513(d)
Regs. §§ 1.513-1 as necessary, -4 & -7
CB 603-605, 613-633
Problems: CB 633-635

Exclusions from Unrelated Business Taxable Income

I.R.C. §§ 512(b)(1)-(5), (7)-(9), (15)
Regs. § 1.512(b) as necessary
CB 635-640
Problems: CB 641 (Problem 1 only)

*Computation of UBTI and Planning

I.R.C. §§ 512(a)(1); 512(b)(6), (10), (12)
CB 642-643
Week of:

11/5/12

**Scope Note:** Tuesday’s class and most of the first hour on Thursday are devoted to advanced topics related to commercial and investment activities. Coverage of unrelated debt-financed income will be limited to a brief lecture and a few hypotheticals based loosely on the problems at pp. 662-663. We will look more deeply at the use of controlled taxable subsidiaries by tax-exempt organizations, joint ventures between for-profits and nonprofits, and the emerging social enterprise movement and the hybrid entities that it has spawned. The second half of Thursday’s class will cover mutual benefit organizations, emphasizing the rationale for exemption and some special tax and constitutional law issues affecting social clubs and other private membership associations.

*Unrelated Debt-Financed Income*

Skim I.R.C. §§ 514(a), (b)(1)-(3), (c)(1), (c)(9)(A)-(C)
CB 651-653, 659-662 (omit Note 1)

**COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES: ADVANCED TOPICS**

Use of Controlled Subsidiaries

CB 663-667

Joint Ventures and Other Structures

CB 667-689
Problem: CB 689-690

Social Enterprises and Hybrid Entities

CB 28-30; 2012 Update Memo 3-5

**MUTUAL BENEFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

RATIONALE FOR TAX EXEMPTION

CB 900-909

*TRADE ASSOCIATIONS AND BUSINESS LEAGUES*

I.R.C. § 501(c)(6)
CB 916-917; skim CB 926-930
Week of: 11/5/12  
(Cont’d)
SOCIAL CLUBS AND FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS
I.R.C. §§ 501(c)(7),(8) & (10)
CB 931-947
Problems: CB 947 (Problem 1 & 2(a))

PRIVATE MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATIONS: SELECTED CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES
CB 987-995 (skim the dissent at 995-1002), 1002-1005; 2002 Update Memo 25-26
Problems: CB 1002

11/12/12  
Scope Note: Our final week begins with a policy-oriented introduction to the charitable deduction and then surveys the basics of § 170 and, as time permits, some special issues related to gifts of property other than cash. Some of this material was covered in basic income tax. The focus will be selective (what’s interesting and fun) and practical.

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

INTRODUCTION
CB 807-812, 817-827

BASIC PRINCIPLES
I.R.C. §§ 170(c), (f)(8); 6113; 6115
CB 828-845 (Sklar is not assigned but the issue in the case is raised in Problem (I) at p. 866, so take a look if you are curious); 856-858, 861-865
Problems: CB 865-866

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PROPERTY
CB 867-868, 872-873, 876-880
Problems: CB 888-889 (Problems 1(a)-(i) – we may not get to all of these)
You'll need to take the Estate Planning seminar

A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Cheesecake (fresh from Brooklyn, NY – see http://www.juniorscheesecake-.com/ – I recommend the “plain”) will be served near the end of the last hour during which bold predictions will be made about the future direction of the law affecting nonprofit organizations and their donors.

FINAL EXAM:  December 4, 2012
Nonprofit organization. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. A nonprofit organization, also known as a non-business entity,[1] is an organization that has been... Starting and Running a Nonprofit Organization, Part I. How to start a nonprofit organization. TEDxClaremontColleges - Allen Proctor - A Vision for Successful Nonprofits. EYL #30 Starting and Running a Nonprofit Organization, Mental Health and Fundraising. What to Think About Before Starting a Nonprofit Organization. Management of Nonprofit Organizations. Management of Nonprofits. By definition, the nonprofit sector operates in the humanitarian goals and objectives space. This means that many nonprofits are loosely structured and are often volunteer driven without formal hierarchies and patterns of management. However, this does not mean that nonprofits need not have formal boards, management structures, and financial control. Nonprofit organizations will solicit individuals for funds, also. Individual donations may come from an organization's membership or constituents (e.g. viewers of public television or residents of a neighborhood community). These are generally small donations, ideally from a large number of people.
Surprisingly, nonprofit organizations share many similarities with for-profit businesses. They are usually incorporated, for instance. They can pay staff salaries and provide benefits. They can invest funds through their endowments. Nonprofits can earn a portion of their income from selling something or charging for services. They can turn a profit as long as that profit is used to fulfill the organization’s charitable mission. Nonprofit organizations are different from for-profit businesses because the public owns them. Such nonprofit organizations do not classify as charitable organizations and as such cannot claim tax exemption under section 501(c)(3). Selective tax exemptions are available under different clauses of Section 501 (c) for such organizations.

b) Membership Organizations

These are usually setup for the benefit of the members of the organization as opposed to a public charity that works for a community. Examples include Veteran’s groups, Trade Associations etc.

Nonprofit Corporations: Not all non-profit organizations are filed with the Secretary of State. Many, but not all, non-profit organizations choose to incorporate. A nonprofit corporation is created by filing a certificate of formation with the secretary of state in accordance with the Texas Business Organizations Code ("BOC").